

SCCTP Serials Holdings Workshop  
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This workshop was unique in two ways. First and foremost, it combined the SCCTP Serials Holdings Workshop (1 days) and a customized OCLC Local Holdings Records workshop (1/2 day) into a two-day training. The goal of the combined workshop was to provide a comprehensive training on the MARC Holdings format and its practical application in the OCLC local holdings environment. Secondly, this was the first Serials Holdings workshop that used the 3rd revised edition of the training manual as newly released in February 2008.

We received 18 Pre-workshop needs assessment returns from 23 registrants. It is interesting to compare the participants. Expectations with that of the past workshops. For instance, when compared with the needs assessments received from the 2002-2005 Holdings Workshops we find that the current participants are most concerned about how to deal with problem holdings, and how to create a MARC holdings and a summary holdings statement whereas the earlier Workshop participants expected to learn how to implement holdings in their local library management systems. However, we discovered that although majority of the libraries have implemented MARC format for holdings in their local systems, not all of them use the paired MARC fields; many are manually input and maintain 866 textual field only; or some institutions have not yet migrated their former non-MARC holdings data to MARC format. As a result, they have not automated the predictive checkin function with publication pattern.

Some survey respondents who do not fully understand the functions of predictive checkin may have given incorrect or misleading answers when asked if their local system has the predictive checkin capability. Some of the pre-workshop exercises are too difficult for those who do not have any prior knowledge of serials holdings.

If time allows in future workshops, it would be interesting to compare the participants. Answers before and after the workshop. Moreover, a couple of returned participants who have taken the first workshop in 2002 stated that they understand the training materials much better this time, because they are more experienced in serials holdings compared to five years ago.

Session 7 of the SCCTP training manual did not generate as much discussions as we had originally hoped. Perhaps this is due to the fact that many participants are inexperienced in serials holdings and the MARC format to participate in the discussion on its future trends and applications. In addition, some participants are paraprofessionals who have not had any prior exposure to issues beyond immediate local operation to participate in a meaningful discussion. However, from the evaluations, we are glad to know that the attendees appreciate Session 7 that provides a broader perspective of MARC Holdings format in its various implementations and potential future applications.

OCLC training was presented with a live demonstration by Margi Mann (Senior OCLC trainer). It was a refreshing break from 1 day of SCCTP PowerPoint slide presentations. This customized training focused on the search, creation and maintenance of OCLC Local Holdings Records in the MARC Holdings format. It was very well received since all libraries need to learn how to maintain their Local Holdings Records as OCLC has implemented the MARC Holdings format.

From the evaluations we find that the participants think highly of the workshop, consider it extremely valuable, the information is current and relevant, and the materials have a cohesive and logical organization. The participants consider that the overall experience is excellent, has increased their knowledge in MARC holdings, and exceeds their expectations. When asked about the most useful part of the workshop, the top answers are the in-class exercises and discussion, and the teaching of MARC coding, the publication patterns, and the training materials.

Consensually, participants found the OCLC session to be the most useful, specially the instruction on Local Holdings Records maintenance and the batch uploading option, as well as the questions and answers session.